The Newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, a member project of Gay Community Social Services

NORTH Bi NORTHWEST

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SBWN: THE PERSONAL AND THE POLITICAL

by Erica Avery

The Seattle Bisexual Women's Network is undergoing changes in organization that have been a long time coming. The effort to meet the needs of a large and diverse group of bisexual women and the stress of maintaining an all-volunteer organization have come to a head, and something will have to give.

A major problem is the perceived division in the group. The most common way to view this split is falling between the newer and the more experienced members. The group has been divided this way from the very beginning, and today there is the "Newcomer's group" and the "Regular" or "Big" (Sunday Night) group. It seems to me that this fissure leads women to identify with one side or the other, and encourages division and uneasiness in our group.

The problem is that merely being a "bisexual woman" (and of course one need not be bisexual at all to belong, only bi-positive, and likely interested in bisexuality in some way) hardly guarantees that you have anything in common at all with another bisexual woman. Certainly diversity is something we have always tried to encourage and honor, with mixed success. But when the issue is how one sees bisexuality and oneself in relation to it, the difference in viewpoints can be an impassable gulf. Usually we choose the easy way to look at these differences, that is by placing them along a continuum. Women start out straight, the thinking goes, and gradually come to realize their attraction to and interest in other women, start coming out, and move into a state of full-fledged queerness. It strikes me that this kind of thinking is merely a reflection of the monosexuality our culture forces upon us. Basically by legitimizing this split we're viewing ourselves as in the middle of some kind of metamorphosis, and some of us have crossed that big hurdle (coming out, turning queer) and others haven't yet. The women in the group who are exploring bisexuality from the lesbian "side" fall right into the "regular" group, having very little in common with the mostly straight-identified newcomers. Coming out is a process, certainly, but it seldom has a clear start and finish, and one person's experience is often radically different from another's. Bisexuality, however, is not necessarily a process.

This kind of split thinking (that some have arrived and some haven't yet) is completely antithetical to the ideals of bisexual liberation as I see them. Bisexuality should embrace fluidity, subtle shading, ambiguity, wide variance, and flexibility in sexual experience and response. However, at Bi events I sometimes secretly feel I am the only true bisexual. I look around and imagine the straight identified women I see beginning to flirt with other women will either go back to their husbands or come all the way out and become Lesbian Separatists, and that the queer-identified bisexuals won't take their heterosexual relationships seriously. The impulse to "choose" (and my internalized biphobia) is understandable given how our society rigidly classifies sexuality. But I know I feel bisexual, and certainly I know others must too. I tend to subscribe to the idea that a person isn't "Bi-Sexual," rather she or he has experiences with or interest in members of both sexes (or anything in between), and ideally that would be accepted and we would all just be "sexual." Yet today there is still a need to assert that one doesn't have to choose, to affirm the experience of being "somewhere in the middle" so we call ourselves Bi.

While we all may fall "in the middle," we need not order ourselves in a line. However, there is a definite difference between a queer-identified bi woman who has been out and active for 10 years, and a "housewife in Bellevue" (as we stereotype) gradually coming to the shocking realization that she might like to kiss her son's room mother. Women who've accepted and embraced their sexuality are frankly not interested in retreading the same old "when did you first realize you were bi" that is so valuable to newcomers. For a person who believes in the vital importance of being out and visible it can be extremely frustrating to sit and listen to someone deny a gay identity, and agonize over whether she should mention "it " to her boyfriend. To be fair, however, there are some "newcomers" who are more out than older regular members.

It is generally acknowledged that the Newcomer's group needs to be led by an experienced facilitator. While everyone seems to agree that it is important to have a place for women new to bisexuality to go, and that SBWN is a good place to provide that service since it is less daunting for a woman to go to a bi organization than a gay one (again, we are seen as a stopping point in a metamorphosis) - not everyone wants to deal with newcomer issues. After all, one goes to a Bi/Feminist group to escape heterosexual oppression and hang-ups. Sometimes we try so hard to accept everyone that

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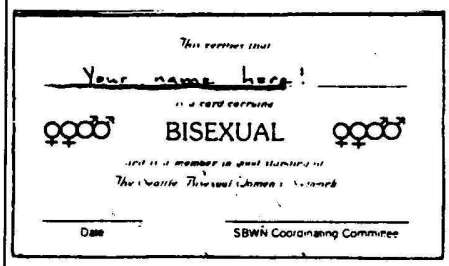
SBWN Statement of Purpose

We are a group of feminists working to create a bisexual support network and to promote equality for bisexual people in both the heterosexual and lesbian/gay communities. We regard ourselves as part of the larger sexual minority community, and consider the fight for lesbian/gay rights to be our own. We are dedicated to the right of all people to define their own sexuality, free from any social, political or economic coercion. We seek to provide a safe place for women to explore all aspects of their sexuality. All women are welcome to attend SBWN activities. While we work with men on issues of common interest, our group is exclusively female to keep the concerns of women in the forefront of our work.

The discrimination we face as women and as sexual minorities is only one facet of oppression: all bigotry is our enemy. We stand behind the racial and ethnic liberation movements and the struggle for economic equality. However, in any work we do, feminism and the interests of women will be our central concern.

Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, P.O. Box 30645; Greenwood Station Seattle, WA 98103-0645, (206) 783-7987.

Join the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network and become a card-carrying bisexual!



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MEETING NOTES

POLYFIDELITY POTLUCK

by Lizabeth Coller

BiNet/Seattle sponsored a Polyfidelity and Nonmonogamy Potluck on October 24th. Its purpose was to get like-minded people together, for discussion, support, and BIG FUN!

It was attended by about 30 people; there was no clear cut number of partnered/unpartnered/multipartnered people. And there were about 8 more men than women.

The evening started out with everyone making a name tag, including a color-code to their 'status.' Using a total of 11 colors, the possibilities were endless: Looking, Complete, Ask Me?, Incomplete, Celibate, Looking for Men, Looking for Women, Kinky, Scared, Terminally Confused, and Socially Crippled! Some people chose one label and most chose several.

The combination of foods was also endless: vegan, vegetarian, and a meat-and-potato casserole, with a staggering array of dishes in between. Many happy folks commented on the great lentil chili and the awesome homemade pies.

The highlight of the event was after dinner when our special version of the game "Scruples" was played. Our questions have been made up over the years, to reflect the issues that have come up around non-monogamy. For example, "What would you do if you came home to find your lover with someone you had agreed was 'Off Limits'?" Or "If you and your partner were out with other lovers one night and you ran into each other, would you aknowledge each other, or not?" Of course, the discussions generated during the game are always interesting!

The party broke up around 10 pm., with the promise of another in January. This event is set for Friday, January 22nd, from 7-10 p.m. at Pilgrim Congregational Church (Broadway and Republican). Admission will be pro-rated, based on the number of good questions you can add to the "Scruples" game. Anyone interested in helping plan, organize, or host, should call the BiNet phone at 720-4506, and leave a message for the Polyfidelity coordinator.▼

From the EDITORS

Things have calmed down some since the elections early this month when a collective sigh of relief was heard across the country. Some of us can barely remember a non-Republican president....but here at *North Bi Northwest* it's back to business as usual. SBWN had our own elections last month, which we managed just fine without CNN coverage. The results are in this issue.

Results of our reader surveys are still trickling in, and one message they all have in common is people want to see more essays and opinion pieces. And we say to that: If you want to see them, write them! We welcome writing on just about any topic related (even tangentially) to women or bisexuality. Tell us what's on your mind. We can only publish what we get from you.

Until our next issue, have a happy winter, curl up under a blanket and write an article for *North Bi Northwest*.

Erica and Dawn

SBWN HOLDS ELECTION

Co-Newcomer Group Coordinators: Ellen B. and Susan R.
Phone Coordinators: Margaret and Susan W.
Door opener/business meeting coordinator: Lynn (one more needed)
Outreach: (needed)
GCSS Liaison: Lizabeth
Newsletter Distributor: (needed)
Treasurer: Lucy (needs replacement)
Secretary: Peggy
Newsletter Editors: Erica and Dawn
Fundraiser: (needed)

As you can see, we need help with the many tasks required to keep SBWN running on a practical level. (See related article on page 1.) First of all, we need someone for Door opening and business meeting coordination, which basically means being on time and ready to run a 15-30 minute business meeting about every other Sunday. We also really would appreciate someone to help increase our outreach to other groups (except GCSS.) We need help taking the newsletters to various bookstores and other places every other month. We need someone to take over Lucy's soon to be vacated job as Treasurer. We also still need fundraising, which can be as simple as organizing a yard sale or movie night once in a while. If you can help with any of these positions, or have other ideas you'd like to work on, call the Bi phone at 783-7987 or let us know at meetings. Thanks.▼

BI NET BIG FUN CONFERENCE

On the weekend of February 12-14, Seattle will host the BiNet USA Northwest Regional Conference. Plans include various workshops: speaker's bureau training, safer sex, multicultural perspectives, civil rights, publications and newsletters, etc. We'll also have party(s), interesting food, regional representative elections, and Big Fun. Let us know if you're coming or need more information (720-4506)▼

GCSS ANNUAL MEETING

Gay Community Social Services (GCSS), our umbrella organization, will be holding its annual meeting on Saturday, January 16, 1993. This meeting will be at the Chicken Soup Brigade, 1002 E Seneca, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. It's a potluck lunch.

The names of SBWN members who will attend this meeting must be given to GCSS by Tuesday, December 15th. Anyone interested should call the Bi phone at 783-7987 and leave their name, number, and discretion level required for return calls.

This is a very important meeting; GCSS is going through some changes, which need to be voted on by the project membership. The more SBWN women present, the better our voice is heard. In the past, we have been the first or second highest represented group. We need to maintain our reputation.

Someone will be calling you to ask you to attend. Please say "Yes."▼

NEWS

ADVICE COLUMN TO BEGIN- Good news for the lovelorn (or just plain clueless): We're going to start running an advice column next month. So send your questions and problems (but no whining about kids who don't write thank you notes, we're not Ann Landers) to:

PO Box 30645
Greenwood Station
Seattle, WA 98103-0645

Note for you *Stranger* readers: THIS IS NOT A "SAVAGE LOVE" IMITATION. Advice Columns have been around as long as there've been newspapers and infidelity. We could never match Mr. Savage's style and wit, and we certainly won't rag on bi's as much as he does. We know you've got a problem, write it down and send it to us.

GRIEF AND LOSS SUPPORT GROUP for Gays and Lesbians meets the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at Group Health Central Hospital. There is no charge for the group, and it is open to anyone suffering the death of a loved one, including non-Group Health Members. The address is 200 15th Ave, Room D630 (6th floor.) For more information please call: Stephen Nute, MPH at 654-4231.

"ELECTION IMPLICATIONS for Feminists" will be held Thursday, December 10, as part of the UW Women's Info Center's continuing Feminist Breakfast Series with the Dean. They are held from 8-9:30 a.m. at the Meany Tower Hotel. What opportunities and challenges do the November elections present to professionals in the human services who are concerned about feminist issues? Call Continuing Social Work Education at 543-5736 for more information.

HELP! "Operation Rescue" and "Lambs of Christ" are harassing the Women's Health Organization of Fargo, whose clinic is the ONLY facility in North Dakota still offering abortion as a choice. The goal of the anti-abortion groups is to make North Dakota the first "Abortion-free" state. You can help by sending contributions and /or letters of support to:

Women's Health Organization of Fargo
c/o Jane Bovard
11 14th St. S.
Fargo, ND 58103

SCIENCE CORNER: TRANSSEXUAL SNAILS: The lingering remnants of a banned chemical are causing female marine snails to grow penises in Puget Sound and the waters of British Columbia. Tributyltin (TBT) was banned as a bottom paint for boats in 1987 by the EPA in the United States, but UW zoologist Alan Kohn found that half the female snails his classes recently inspected at Alki point were still developing male organs. The change is called imposex. (Reported in *The Seattle Times*, November 13, 1992)

THE WOMEN'S CAUCUS FOR ART WCA) is a national non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the professionalism of women in the visual arts. Membership is open to all. The group is committed to education, inclusion of all groups in art, development of non-bigoted art, and gaining representation and visibility for the work of all women in the art community, among other things. For membership information contact:

Barbara Bruch (SWCA)
1416 11th Ave W
Seattle, WA 98119
(206) 285-0346

ATTENTION!!
PORTLAND, OREGON WOMEN!!

Bi Women's group in formation in Portland. For information, write:
M. Kelly
PO Box 10863
Portland, OR 97210

GAY/LESBIAN UNIVERSITY- Starting January 15 1993, the Gay/Lesbian University (GLU) will schedule adult community education classes for PWAs, Lesbians, Gays, and all of our friends. The concept of GLU is loosely based on the notion of the Experimental College at the UW and other schools.. Classes at GLU will be taught by people like yourself with skills and information that others are interested in learning. From AIDS to the proverbial letter "Z" some of the offerings include art courses, beer making, computers, kayaking, men, organizing, politics, self -help, women and/or you name it. GLU student tuition is only $10 a quarter and some scholarships are available. Each class may or may not require an additional fee.

If you are interested in teaching at GLU, call or write now. Students can register for classes by mail as soon as the catalog hits the streets the first week of December. Students that pre-register and pay the tuition fee in advance will receive the catalog in the mail as soon as it is printed. Otherwise the catalog will be made available at many local Gay/Lesbian establishments until they run out. Instructor and student registration sheets can be picked up at many Capitol Hill locations NOW. If you can not find any forms feel free to call for one. For more information call 323-7483 or write:

GLU
PO Box 20771
Seattle, WA 98102.

OPINION

SBWN STRUGGLES

(Continued from page 1)

we tolerate homophobia and misogyny.

The real split in our group may fall between those who have a political perspective on bi-ness and those who don't. "Political" is a heavily used word in our group, and I'm not sure it means the same thing to everyone. To me, political means relating one's own identity and experience to a larger community, and forming alliances with people like oneself to further one's own goals. In our case, I think it means being out and visible, and working for the acceptance of all forms of sexuality and relationships. This is done on a personal level, by being out; on an interpersonal level through networking, support, and discussion; on a community and educational level, through talks and publications; on a government level by writing letters and organizing rallies; and, in its purest form, by taking radical direct action.

A frequent complaint from the Newcomer's group is that the regular group is "too political." The group is political, but not extremely so by any standards. One issue we've discussed periodically is finding alternate words for our acronym, omitting the B-word, so that members can mention their volunteer work on resumes and submit them to corporations that would otherwise reject them for association with a queer group: hardly a political act. This is a group where each meeting begins with the reminder not to identify members outside the group by mentioning SBWN, so as not to accidentally out them. I respect the need for confidentiality in a support group, and no one should out someone else - no one should need to. It is demoralizing to meet with your bisexual sisters one night and know you may be ignored or denied if you happen to bump into a sister the next day in Fred Meyer. It feels like a secret society, almost shameful. Again, hardly political.

But the regular Sunday night group, especially its core group of veterans who comprise most of the CC (coordinating committee) are more political than newcomers. They are less in need of support and more interested in challenging discussions of issues related to bisexuality and feminism. They are more interested in staying plugged into the worldwide bisexual network and they take a strong interest in the newsletter. These women work hard, and they are frustrated that they are not finding what they need when they show up at six o'clock for meetings. They feel they are putting on an event for women who would like to show up when they want and never get involved.

A lot of women do skip the business meetings, straggling in late, but the business end of an organization, dull as it may be, is what makes sure there is still a room to go to, a mailbox, a phone number, ads in the paper, and so on. I don't think it's really a situation of just "newcomers"; a lot of women have been attending for months and are still reluctant to get involved. Some see it as merely a social event, or perhaps they feel alienated, or perhaps they just don't care about the larger bisexual movement. Some fear anything that hints of "being political."

All kinds of women's groups in this "postfeminist" era are finding it hard to get women motivated to be political and identify as feminist. The reasons for that are another issue, but I think part of it is that we're not sure what needs to be done politically. Gay people and women are constantly told we're already free, what more do we want? Seattle in particular is a fairly progressive town (far enough from Oregon to give the dangerous illusion of safety) and home to a large gay community. Bisexuals are queer and we need to work on queer issues, but we need to do that as bisexuals. Many of us have had the experience of hiding in the Gay closet and we need to be out about and affirming of our attraction to the opposite sex in addition to our queerness, otherwise there is no need for a separate Bi group. I'm sure if enough of us were interested we could come up with some creative political ideas. We have had a couple rallies and some speaking events, all successful, and I'm sure we can do more. For instance, I myself am always up for a PDA; after all being political can be fun! Our "Statement of Purpose" states that we are feminists. We shouldn't be criticized from within our own group for being too political.

I suspect another reason for lack of interest and cohesiveness is that despite warnings against it, women in the group do develop "particular friendships." These are unavoidable, but in the repressed way we as Americans deal with things, they are a powerful force that isn't spoken about. In the masculine tradition, we are expected to separate business from personal affairs, and continue on. We need to ask ourselves how possible this is, and to what extent we want to remain businesslike with each other for fear of threatening our unity, and to what degree need relationships stand in our way.

Another reason the group has come to seem like a small group of women making a presentation to a larger uninvolved audience is the reluctance of new people to come in and try to change things. We have respect for these older and more experienced women that is well deserved, and the fact that they are often older in years can add to the intimidation. Having been raised in a patri-

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(Add $3 postage for over 15 pc.) Make out ck. or money order to: E. Nania
52 Garrison Rd., Brookline, MA 02146 - Allow 3 weeks delivery.

EVENTS

CREATING CHANGE CONFERENCE: BISEXUAL PRESENCE FELT

A bi's eye perspective on the National Gay/Lesbian Task Force's (NGLTF) 1992 Creating Change Conference

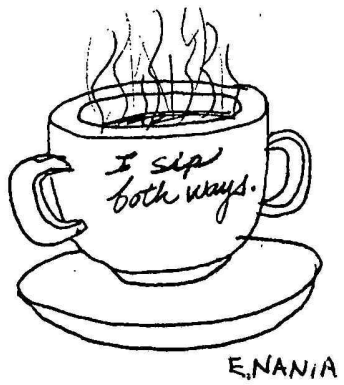
by Robyn Ochs

More than 1400 lesbian and gay...and bisexual...and transgender activists gathered together November 13-15 in the (gag me) lovely Los Angeles Airport Hilton Hotel. Fellow hotel guests included, among others, a professional football team and a beauty pageant. All in all, it was the perfect backdrop for an Armistead Maupin novel, lacking only, perhaps, believability.

This year's conference included a powerful collection of national and local bi activists. From San Francisco: Lani Kaahumanu (co-editor of *Bi Any Other Name* and an active member of BiPol and other groups); Gerard Palmeri (BiNet representative to the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Rights & Liberation); and Naomi Tucker (Bay Area activist and co-editor of an upcoming book on bi politics). From Long Beach, CA: Gary North (bi activist and journalist). From St. Paul, MN: Victor Raymond. From Chicago, IL: Melissa Merry. From Washington, DC: Elias Farajajé-Jones (local activist and editor of an upcoming anthology on bi men of color). From the Boston area: Laura Pérez, Wayne Bryant and myself. And this is only a partial list.

Thanks to behind-the-scenes activism over the past several months (especially to Lani, Elias and Loraine Hutchins,) the conference included more workshops on bisexuality than in previous years, including among them: LesBiGay Studies, Lesbian/Bi Women's Dialogue, Gay/Bi Men's Dialogue, Bi Activists in the Lesbian/Gay community, and a Bi Caucus. In addition, the pre-conference institute for People of Color made its focus bisexuality, coalition building and diversity, and bi activists of color Lani, Victor, Elias and Laura were panelists at the institute.

While the conference was not always sunshine and light as far as bisexual recognition was concerned, we discovered a large number of active lesbian and gay allies. Fifty women, the majority lesbian, attended the lesbian/bi women's dialogue, which was skillfully facilitated by Michelle Crone, with bi panelists Robyn Ochs and Laura Pérez, and lesbian panelists Pat Hussein of Atlanta and Marj Plumb of San Francisco. It was heartwarming to see an atmosphere safe enough for us to honestly express our fears and our hopes to one another, and where we were really listening to each other.



Also interesting was the workshop on Queer Sex: Blurring the Boundaries, which dealt with a phenomenon which has recently begun to be discussed in the community: gay men and lesbians having sex with one another. I did not attend this panel, but apparently there was a discussion of the difference between queer sex, heterosex, and bisex, with the argument being made that queer sex is different from bisex or heterosex. Some bi people who attended this panel felt that there was a great deal of biphobia present. Whether or not this is true, I find it a healthy sign when any of us are more able to speak honestly and publicly about our reality and experience.

One related story: on Saturday night there was an (expensive!) fundraiser for NGLTF. Robin Tyler, who was emceeing the event, acknowledged the presence of singer/songwriter/cultural worker Holly Near, who was sitting in the audience. Holly stood to enthusiastic applause. After the applause subsided, Robin Tyler continued, "I love you, Holly, but thanks to you I have to say that I'm a lesbian who sleeps with women." (For those unfamiliar with Holly Near, she identifies publicly as a lesbian who sleeps with men.) There was a great deal of laughter, and I was among those laughing.

Obviously I can't speak for all bi activists, not even for all bi activists who attended the 1992 Creating Change Conference, but my sense was that we went home feeling that our presence was felt by all conference attendees, and appreciated by many. We still have a long road to travel before our contributions to the lesbian/gay/bi/transgender movement are fully recognized, but things are changing for the better at a much faster pace than I ever dreamed possible.

And, bi the way, see you at the March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay & Bi Equal Rights and Liberation on Sunday, April 25. There will most certainly be a bisexual contingent at the March, as well as a national BiNet meeting on Friday the 23rd, and a day-long bi conference on April 24.

Robyn Ochs is a Cambridge, MA based activist. Her works have appeared in a number of anthologies and she speaks around the United States on bisexuality and coalition building. She taught the second and third courses (ever) on bisexuality.▼

OPINION

SBWN STRUGGLES

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archal society, we're all used to looking to figures of authority in already established organizations with fixed rules and goals. It's hard for new people to accept that this is Our Group and we can work with veteran members to change it as we would like to see it develop. As women we may tend to cooperate rather than take charge, but no one will, out of politeness if nothing else, attempt to take control of a 6 year old group at one's first meeting. Neither should one expect all the work to be done by someone else for her benefit. At the very least one should pay generously for such services. Donations received at meetings have not always met the cost of operation.

Merely being in an all-women's group is a challenge. As women we pressure each other, we expect a lot. It's not easy being female or bisexual. There are snide comments about the aforementioned "housewives in Bellevue," or about long hair and makeup. There is competition over who is a better feminist. Despite the hurt and fear many of us feel towards lesbians, due to experiences of negative sentiment directed at bi women (also usually out of hurt and fear), I find that we pressure each other to prefer women to men. Yet, at the same time, we toss around accusations of man-bashing. Man-bashing may occur, but most of what I've heard called man-bashing is just some basic feminist theory and a little healthy venting of frustration. We're boxing each other in: Don't like men better, but don't express anger at them; like women but don't be a feminist; you're not feminist enough but don't be a lesbian. Probably the best political work we can do right now, at the risk of sounding trite, is to learn to accept ourselves and each other.

We talk a lot about creating safe space, a very important concern. I think we also need to keep in mind that a tolerant environment doesn't mean an unchallenging one. Political correctness, which I am always willing to defend (the way I understand it at least) is based upon questioning, debate, and discussion. Unfortunately we often fall into the trap of seeing our group as homogeneous ("White Women from Walling-ford") and we see the task before us as how to attract more women of color, older women, and so on. I believe if we start by acknowledging our own diversity, we will be better at accepting others'. We will also need to deal with our own prejudices. Outreach is important, but no one is going to want to be one of our tokens.

Then there's burnout: it's tough being an all volunteer group. Most of us have jobs, families, and many other concerns. After the upsurge in bisexual visibility and a deluge of articles in the mid-to-late 80's, one starts to wonder if there's anything left to say. And if inclusion means you have to attend all those Freedom Day name change battles, is it worth it?

So where is SBWN going? At the last CC meeting we decided to try letting the meetings run themselves. The CC will continue to hold up the business end (the rent, the mail, the newsletter) but not be so pressured to constantly provide facilitation and event planning. In addition, a Feminist Reading Group will be forming (see article in this issue.).

To promote good discussion, the size of this group will probably have to be limited. Size is always a funny issue to me, we talk about needing smaller groups, but I look around me and can't imagine who I would want to leave out. A large crowd is great for making you feel you're not alone, for supporting diversity, and for generating revenue, but 40 women in one room can't do much real sharing in two hours. The larger a group is, the quicker its identity breaks down.

> "Our Statement of Purpose states that we are feminists. We shouldn't be criticized from within our own group for being too political'"

Diversity can also create limitations, as I've discussed before. However it is greatly to our benefit as a group that we are all good at and interested in different things. And there is common ground on which we stand. I would like to see in our group more integration of those seeking rap/support and those seeking feminist and political stimulation. We may never all meet together with a common agenda, but we must encourage and respect each other and our differing perspectives and goals.

I would like to see more political action, maybe in a small committed group of interested people. I would like to see us take seriously our statement of purpose and our identity as a group. I would like to see us follow through on more things we talk about regarding access issues like transportation and child care. I would like to see lively and serious discussion at meetings, coupled with a commitment to a safe environment for everyone. I would like to see more group participation in the newsletter, with submissions, feedback, and subscriptions. I feel a little like I've aired all of SBWN's dirty laundry and maybe crossed a couple of lines, but maybe we'll get some exciting Letters to the Editors and thoughtful discussion at meetings as a result!

Some say that BiNet is where the energy is. I'm glad of that, and I will participate ,but I want to find that energy in an all-women's group. A group that is sure to listen to women and be led by women. I love SBWN, and I'll never forget the first meeting I attended, having never heard of a "bisexual" group, and realizing that all these women, while sharing my love for other women, were also accepting of my love for men. There was nothing to hide. Beth Weise called it "coming home." It's something too important to lose.▼

RESOURCES

*The following is a list of publications we have regularly received over the past few years. Some are monthly, others sporadic. Those marked * are no longer in print. If you're in the Seattle area and would like to see copies of any of these magazines, contact Peggy through SBWN.*

*BABN
Bay Area Bi Network
2404 California St #24
San Francisco, CA 94115
File 2/88-3/90, after which *Anything That Moves* was born.

MATRIX
Women's Newsmagazine
108 Locust St #13
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
File 5/90-6/91

LES/CON
Lesbian Contradiction
584 Castro St #263
San Francisco, CA 94114
Available in braille
File 6/89 - current

*BIsexuality: News Views and Networking
Gibbin Publications
PO Box 1174
Visalia, CA 93291-1174
File 12/87-12/90

*Bi Ways
PO Box 959
Washington, DC 20044

Bisexual Centrist
BiCentrist Alliance
PO Box 2254
Washington, DC 20013-2254
File 4/92-current

off our backs
2423 18th St NW
Washington, DC 20009
Available in braille & tape
File 3/90-current

GLPCI Network
Gay/Lesbian Parents Coalition International
PO Box 50360
Washington, DC 20091

Both Sides Now
Maui's Gay Lesbian Bi Organization
PO Box 5042
Kahului, HI 96732
File 3/88-current

Gay Community News
PO Box 3224
Honolulu, HI 96801
File 3/89-8/91

*Bi-Lines
Action Bi Women
3225 N Sheffield
Chicago, IL 60657
File 9/88-6/90

The Bi Monthly
Champaign-Urbana Bi Network
c/o McKinley Foundation
809 S Fifth St
Champaign, IL 61820
File 4/92-current

Socialism & Sexuality
LGB Commission of Democratic Socialists of America
c/o Chicago DSA
1608 N Milwaukee
Chicago, IL 60647
File 8/92-current

Side by Side
BiNetwork of Washington, DC Area
PO Box 7657
Langley, MD 20787
File 2/91-current

Bi Women
Boston Bi Women's Network
PO Box 639
Cambridge, MA 02140
File 10/87-current

BBMN News
Boston Bi Men's Network
95 Berkeley St #613
Boston, MA 02116
File 12/90-current

SHELIX
PO Box 416
Florence Station
Northhampton, MA 01060
Woman/woman SM support
File 3/89-current

Bi Focal
Bisexual Connection
PO Box 13158
Minneapolis, MN 55414
File 5/88-6/90

*Bisexual Community Forum
BCF
PO Box 31318
Portland, OR 97211
File 9/87-6/90

Bi Focus
Philadelphia's Bi Community
PO Box 30372
Philadelphia, PA 19103
File 3/91-current

Bi Angles APA
Rifka Reichler
709 N Duff St
Mitchell, SD 57301
Contribute material and get a copy

GLC Newsletter
GLB Coalition of Snohomish County
PO Box 993
Everett, WA 98206-0993
File 1/91-current

Parents BANNER
PFLAG Seattle
1202 E Pike St Suite 620
Seattle, WA 98122
File 3/91-current

MAIL WE GET

(continued)

Equity Advocate
Seattle Women's Commission Update
Mayor's LGB Task Force
Office for Women's Rights
700 3rd Ave Room 940
Seattle, WA 98104-1809
File 12/87-current

LRC Community News
Lesbian Resource Center or
Pacific Women's Resources
1208 E Pine St
Seattle, WA 98122-1932

Emerald City News
Seattle's transgender community
PO Box 31318
Seattle, WA 98103
File 2/90-1/92

Directions Northwest
Evangelicals Concerned
PO Box 20189
Seattle, WA 98102
File 1990-1991

SAFFIR Reader
Seattle Area Fat Feminist Inspiration & Rage
c/o 2301 3rd Av #421
Seattle, WA 98121

S.H.A.R.E.
THE MAZE
Support Help & Resources Exchange
Multiple personality & dissociative disorders
PO Box 88722
Tukwila, WA 98138-2722

*Bi-Line
Bi Focus
Box 34172 Station D
Vancouver, BC V6J 4N1
Canada
File 1988

GO INFO
Ottawa's LGB Community
PO Box 2919 Station D
Ottawa, Ont K1P 5W9
Canada
File 1992

Confidencial
Puclicaciones Unicornia
Apartado Postal 601-2300
Curridabat Costa Rica
File 4/91-current

BILINES
Wellington Bi Women's Group
PO Box 5145
Wellington, New Zealand
File 5/90-current

Bi-Nieuws
Landelijk Netwerk Biseksualiteit
Postbus 75087
1070 AB Amsterdam
Netherlands
File Najaar89-current

BiWays
Western Australia Bi Network
WABN
Box 1 Barker News
368 Canning Hwy
Como Wa 6152
Australia
File 1992

BiFrost, the Rainbow Bridge
PO Box 117
Norwich NR1 2SU
England
File 2/91-current

*BI MONTHLY
London Bi Group
Off Pink Publishing
PO Box BM-BILondon WC1N 3XXEngland
publisher of Bisexual Lives
File 1988

-compiled by Peggy Walsh ▼

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Authors on sibling relationships have noted that within the body of literature on AIDS, almost nothing has been written from the vantage points of brothers and sisters. Because of this, neither the effects of AIDS nor the joys and sorrows of kindredness are being fully addressed.

As a step to remedying this, I am pursuing a book project that will explore the ways in which brothers and sisters move through the epidemic together. The book, tentatively entitled *Each Other's Keeper: Brothers and Sisters Write About AIDS*, will consist of approximately two dozen essays by individuals who are (or have been) on this journey. It will have two perspectives: that of people with AIDS and that of their siblings.

Anyone interested in contributing is invited to do so. Essays should be typed or clearly printed, double spaced, and no longer than 24 pages. All essays will be edited in consultation with the writer and chosen to strike an overall balance between sexual orientation, gender, color, religious and educational background, ethnicity and age. Requests for confidentiality will be wholly respected.

All essays should be sent by February 16, 1993 to:

James Kiely
c/o Boston AIDS Consortium
665 Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02115

For further information, please call (617)432-0885. ▼

EDUCATION

TWO SAFER SEX VIGNETTES

by Alice Chalmers

1991

I had company for the weekend, my friend V. from San Francisco here for a conference.

On Saturday night after the dance, she had overnight company of her own. They were quiet, invisible. In the morning, I occasionally heard them murmuring in their room as I did housework. It began to look like they weren't going to be attending the Sunday caucuses at the conference.

Around one o'clock in the afternoon, V. wandered through the house, finally finding me painting walls in the basement. She sat on a step halfway down. We greeted one another, and she said she had a guest request. I said OK, then waited. There was a looooooonng ..... pause, while I pondered the possibilities: tea and toast? the loan of a toothbrush? towels?

Finally, her face a rather brightish pink, she asked if I had a dental dam she could have.

Of course! Ever the gracious hostess, I fished out just what she needed: a little kit I'd gotten the Pride Festival a month before, where a Northwest AIDS Foundation (NWAF) volunteer pressed me with safer sex kits. I'd said, "But, it's not happening these days." She said, "Well, take some anyway, one can always hope!"

V. peeked inside the envelope at the candy, dental dam, glove, condom, (commented, "This might come in handy"), and disappeared again until 5 p.m..

1992

I was out of town at a four-day conference, staying with three other people from home in the borrowed apartment of a friend. I shared the bed with a long-ago lover, while the other two slept out in the living room.

Late on the last night, as I was lying in the hot stuffy room waiting to go to sleep, I felt felt a soft, smooth hand slide gently across my breasts. Ooh, delicious! But do I want to accept this invitation?

Oh, I do. Yes! But we really should use latex, as we've both traveled several paths since our last intimate encounter. And I do carry a little safer sex kit in my zipper case along with my toothbrush and such, because you never know...

But we've discussed this before and I know my companion has strong feelings against using condoms (doesn't feel good enough). And my kit is in the bathroom, past where the others are sleeping, and they would probably be uncomfortable knowing (hearing) what we're doing in the next room. And I know the right thing to do, but we are both very low risk for any sort of infection (he more than I, actually).

So, did we Do The Right Thing?

No, I'm sorry to say. We did make love, and it was lovely fun, but I feel a little regret for not upholding my own standards. I shall do better next time!

Thanks to NWAF for being so generous with safer sex kits (I have used them), and to all whose donations help keep NWAF going, and to support groups which help us learn and strengthen our resolve.▼

FEMINIST READING GROUP TO BEGIN

by Lizabeth Coller

Because I have never read *The Second Sex*, or *The Feminine Mystique*, or even *The Beauty Myth*; because I don't know the roots of the Women's Movement, and I don't know where it is going, I am starting a BiFriendly Feminist Women's Reading Group. I know I won't read these books on my own, so I hope to get the motivation to read from other women, and I'm looking forward to thought-provoking conversations as well.

I will have a potluck at my house on Sunday, January 10th, at 5:30 p.m. Each woman is to bring a dish or beverage, a chair or pillow, and up to three books she would like to read and discuss in a group. If you don't have the book(s), a description or a book review will do. We will select the first 2 or 3 books to read, and set up a schedule of monthly or bi-monthly meetings.

Of course, only women are invited; I want to foster discussion of feminist issues with other women. Any sexual identity is welcome, but you must be bisexual/lesbian/woman friendly. I know not everyone will want to read each book selected, so I ask for a commitment on a "per book" basis. If you drop out for a book or two, you'll get a call when we select some new ones, so you can join in again, if you want.

Each woman will be asked to facilitate a meeting. This doesn't necessarily mean having it at your home; it means doing some extra research, some extra reading, to make the discussion more interesting. This task will be rotated among the members of the group.

If you have any questions, call the BiPhone at 783-7987, and leave a message for Lizabeth. Include your name, phone #, and how much discretion I need to use if I talk to a roommate or answering machine. Those of you who know me can call me directly. For the potluck, I do not keep a vegetarian house, I have cats, and small, sleeping or self-entertaining children are welcome.

So dig up those feminist books you've always meant to read, and let's get started!▼

SEX

MUSINGS ON MULTIPLE-PARTNERED SEX

by Annabella

I have been involved in several multi-partner sex acts, and I find that some people are uncomfortable discussing this. At the same time, a lot of women seem to have fantasies about having more than one partner, and so I thought I'd describe what I've experienced.

The first time I had sex with more than one person was with two men. They were friends, but they could not share me. First one, then the other, had sex with me. At no time were both in bed with me. While one man was with me, the other just stood at the other side of the room, not watching, not playing with himself. While I enjoyed myself, it wasn't much different from just one partner at a time.

Several years later a man I was dating asked me if I would sleep with his best friend. I had met this friend, Pete, and was very attracted to him, so I said sure, but that he, Mark, had to be there. Mark was very excited about this, and I was hoping for a more satisfying time than before.

It was great; both men were with me for the entire evening. It was like two brothers sharing, with no jealousy, no tempers, but most of all two men together. While I went down on one, the other would go down on me. While I had one in me, I could play with the other. Communication was open, so when I felt uncomfortable when Mark wanted me to take both men at the same time, I was able to say "No." I was not prepared for this experience, and I was allowed the chance to say so.

We tried to get together again, but the timing never worked out, and I stopped seeing Mark some time after this. It was many years before I found the opportunity to have multi-partnered sex again.

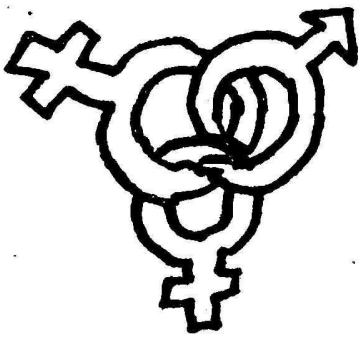
Several years ago I met a man, Greg, and we started a casual sexual relationship. He was very emotionally involved with another woman, and he introduced us. He was interested in getting Sandy together with another woman, and this was a fantasy they both shared. I found Sandy very sexy. One evening, while watching TV, Greg started playing with me, and then with Sandy. I was wrapped up in what Greg was doing to me, and at first I didn't realize he was also playing with her. Things went slowly, as I didn't know if I was invited to participate, or if I was just supposed to watch, and maybe help things along. When Sandy kissed me, and then reached into my shirt for my breast, there was no doubt about her intentions.

"Having two partners is like having sex in a new place: exciting and problematic..."

We moved up to the bed, where we took turns being in the middle. With two people working on you, you can experience new things, have twice as much done at one time. I could kiss Sandy while she came, enjoying her feelings, like electricity, swallowing her moans. When Greg was in the middle, he could give each of us pleasure, orally and vaginally. Sandy and I would face each other, kiss, play with each other's breasts, and reach for the other's clit. I think this was Greg's favorite position. The three of us enjoyed ourselves, and we repeated this many times. Sandy would never let me go down on her, since she felt she would not be able to reciprocate. I told her she wasn't required to, but she was so scared about this, I didn't push.

Eventually Greg and Sandy became monogamous, and then married.

I have had several other group affairs, always with a man and another woman. Sometimes one of the others is 'my' partner,



and sometimes we have all been friends. I find that I don't enjoy being an observer, that I want to be fully involved in what is going on. Things seem to work best when there is a previous history between each of the people, since communication is more open. And expectations must be realistic; not all women come all the time, no matter what the circumstances, and no matter how excited she might be about the idea. And the man must not be penis-centered; he must be able to think of his partners, and pleasure them, or let them pleasure themselves.

I do have one fantasy remaining in regards to group sex; two men, taking me anally and vaginally. I figure this scenario takes planning, as the 'right' size of the men is important to my enjoying myself, and their lack of anal-phobia is imperative. In time.

All the while I have also had single-partner sex. Having been with more than one lover at a time has not 'ruined' having one partner, hasn't made it seem mundane. Having two partners is like having sex in a new place; exciting and problematic, but not the only place to have sex.

I don't bring up the idea of adding another person to our affair unless I feel the first person is more than just titillated by the idea. The third person should be carefully picked, if this is the first time for any of you. The most important thing is that all of you can talk to each other and the rest will fall into place.▼

Calendar

Please note that topics can be tentative. Call the bi-phone at 783-7987 to check.
For men's events, call the Seattle Bisexual Men's Union at 720-4506.
For information about BiNet events call 720-4506

DEC 6 SBWN Check-in meeting, 6pm

DEC 8 SBWN Phone answered LIVE, 7-9pm

DEC 11 *BiNet monthly meeting and potluck, 7pm at Peggy's

DEC 13 SBMU Topic night: Therapeutic and Sensual Massage, SCCC portable B108, 7pm. Future events planning meeting begins at 5:30. Meet afterwards at 9pm at Bill's pizza between Pine and Harvard.

DEC 14 SBWN Newcomer's group, 7:15 pm

DEC 15 *GCSS meeting

DEC 19 *BiNet Solstice Party, call for location, 2pm

DEC 20 SBWN meeting and topic TBA. Please call to confirm due to holiday schedules.

HAPPY NEW YEAR 1993!!!

JAN 3 SBWN Check-in, 6pm

JAN 6 SBWN Coordinating Committee meeting, 7pm at Susan's

JAN 8 *BiNet monthly potluck/meeting, 7pm at Mel & Tim's

JAN 10 Feminist Reading group initial meeting, 5:50 pm at Lizabeth's

JAN 10 SBMU meeting, 7pm, topic TBA

JAN 16 *GCSS Annual Membership meeting (no Tuesday meeting)

JAN 17 SBWN Topic night: Flirting and Dating, 6pm

JAN 22 *Binet Polyfidelity Potluck and Party, 7pm at Pilgrim Congregational (Broadway and Republican)

JAN 24 SBMU social, 7pm, call Men's phone for location.

JAN 25 SBWN Newcomer's group, 7:15pm

JAN 31 SBWN Check-in meeting, 6pm

FEB 12-14 *BiNet Northwest Regional Conference: workshops, parties, BIG FUN and good food. Call for more information and location

APRIL 23-25 * March on Washington and BiNet USA annual conference

*DENOTES MIXED-GENDER EVENTS

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Call SBWN at 783-7987 to leave a message if interested in advertising and we'll get back to you as soon as possible